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Peabody Coal sponsors archaeological research

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PEABODY COAL SPONSORS
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

MISSOULA--

An agreement recently signed by Peabody Coal Company, the world's largest coal producer, and the Statewide Archaeological Survey of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Montana provides for an archaeological research program that will begin this summer with a survey of a segment of Peabody's land holdings in southeastern Montana.

According to Gene Tuma, director of conservation for Peabody Coal, the program was initiated in response to company and University concern about the potential loss of several archaeological sites close to Peabody's Big Sky Mine near Colstrip.

Because of the company's highly successful program of sponsored archaeological research at Black Mesa in Arizona, Tuma felt a similar research program should be conducted in Montana to preserve the state's antiquities from destruction by strip mining.

The archaeological survey and salvage project will be a part of the company's ongoing scientific research and land reclamation program.

If sites of significant national, state or local interest are found during the initial survey, then the University and Peabody will negotiate agreements for excavation, according to Dr. Floyd W. Sharrock, director of the Statewide Archaeological Survey.

Field parties composed of University students will be led this summer by Dale E. Fredlund, field director for the project. Field work is scheduled to begin July 1, 1971.

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